

The 6 Concepts of Music

DURATION – how long something lasts.

Beat – the underlying pulse
Rhythm – a specific grouping of note values – long and short
Ostinato pattern – short repetitive pattern
Regular rhythm – a rhythm that typically groups notes in traditional combinations
Irregular rhythm – a rhythm that consists of <i>notes that not traditionally grouped</i>
Tempo – the speed of a piece of music
Silence – the absence of sound
Time signature – the number of beats in a bar, eg 2/4, $\frac{3}{4}$, 4/4, 3/8, 6/8, 9/8, 5/4, 6/4 etc...
Mixed Metre – when a piece of music has used a variety of time signatures
Continuity – a continuous part/rhythm
Polyrhythm – more than one rhythm
Drone – a long sustained low pitch
Sustain – a held sound/note
Anacrusis – a note occurring before the first beat of the first bar
Syncopation – occurs when the accent is on the weaker beats or the 'off' beat. E.g., the emphasis of the 2 nd and 4 th beats instead of the 1 st and 3 rd
Accent – to emphasise or stress a note
Rubato – this means 'robbing'. You steal part of the value of one note and pay it back on the next. Therefore the speed ebbs and flows
Allegro – lively and fast
Andante - at a walking pace
Moderato – at a moderate speed
Presto - Fast
Vivace – Very fast
Lento – slow

PITCH – Refers to the highness or low-ness of a sound.

Tonality - the home pitch and scale used in a piece of music
Major scale – happy sounding scale consisting of: tone, tone, semitone, tone, tone, tone, semitone
Minor scale – sad sounding scale consisting of: tone, semitone, tone, tone, semitone, tone & a half, semitone
Pentatonic scale – scale often used in folk music and music of other cultures. Omits the 4 th and 7 th scale degrees
Blues scale – a blues and jazz sounding scale that consists of the following: I, flat III, IV, flat V, V, flat VII
Chromatic scale – a scale that uses all 12 semitones within an octave
High pitch – high register
Low pitch – low register
Narrow pitch – where the notes of a melody span a small range of notes
Wide pitch – where the notes of a melody span across a large register
Semitone – the smallest space between 2 notes
Tone – 2 semitones
Pitch direction – The specific direction or contour of the pitch. E.g., Pitch moves in steps /Pitch moves in leaps
Definite pitch – where you can hear the type of scale being used
Indefinite pitch – where the key area is unclear
Interval – the space between two notes
Unison – 2 or more parts doing the same thing
Theme – the main thematic material
Harmony – a part which is often a 3 rd higher or lower than the main melody
Melodic Rise and fall – where the melody's contour has a rise and fall affect
Angular melody – where the melody is rigid and moves about in leaps

Consonance – where the notes have a sound of resolution and stability. Intervals that sound pleasant
Dissonance – where the notes have a feeling of tension and unease. Intervals that clash
Transpose - a change of register
Modulation – a key change
Tonal – where a piece of music is based on a definite key
Atonal – where a piece of music does not belong to any key.
Perfect Cadence - where the final chords in a piece are V - I
Imperfect Cadence – where the chords used in the middle of a piece are I - V
Plagal Cadence – two chords that have the ‘Amen’ sound. IV – V
Interrupted Cadence – two chords that sound unresolved. V – VI
Chord – three or more pitches played at the same time
Chord progression – a pattern of chords
Triad – three notes of a chord played at the same time
Arpeggio – where the notes of a chord are split up and played one at a time
Tone Cluster – a chord that is comprised of adjacent and dissonant notes

DYNAMICS & EXPRESSIVE TECHNIQUES – dynamics are how loud and/or soft a piece of music is. An expressive Technique is the way in which is played.

Piano – soft
Forte – loud
Mezzopiano - Moderately Soft – not too soft or too loud
Mezzoforte - Moderately Loud – not too loud
Crescendo – gradually getting louder
Diminuendo – gradually becoming softer
Legato – smooth and connected
Staccato – short and detached

Accented – to place emphasis on
Plucked – where a string is plucked
Strummed – where a guitar is strummed
Walking – where a double bass (usually) is played by the fingers walking across the strings.
Staccato – short and detached
Legato – smoothly and connected
Slide – sliding from one note to another up a string
Bend – to bend the string with the finger
Trill – to play quickly between 2 notes
Ornamentation – decoration of a note
Contrast – the difference between parts
Vibrato – to slightly shake the sound, creating a tiny variation in pitch
Tremolo – the quick repetition of the same note
Glissando – a rapid scale played in a sliding motion
Flutter tonguing – creating a whirring effect by rapidly hitting the roof of the mouth with the tongue
Pizzicato – to pluck
Double stopping – to bow across two strings at once
Arco – to play with a bow
Slap – a technique mostly used on the bass guitar where the player slaps the string
Drum roll – alternating drum strokes rapidly
Rim shot – to hit the side of the snare drum
Delay – an echo effect
Mute – where a sound is muffled and blocked
Falsetto – where a male sings using his head voice
Scat – a style of jazz singing using non-sense syllables usually in a fast and improvised way.

TONE COLOUR - the **timbre** or **sound quality**.

Performing media – the instrument or sound source
Aerophone – wind instruments
Chordophone – stringed instrument
Membranophone – drums covered by membrane (skin)
Idiophone - percussion
Electronic sounds – instruments that use technology
Nasally, muted, muffled, powerful, strong, grand - trumpet
Brilliant, sharp, exact, bright - violin
Lazy, rumble - tuba
Thumpy, raw - Walking Double Bass
Shrill, woody, bright, glittering - Piccolo
Woody, hollow, raw - Clarinet
Breathy, raw, sensual, mellow, warm, sweet - Flute
Fuzzy, distorted, jingle jangle - Electric guitar
smooth, harsh - Vocals
mystical, magical, and dreamy - Harp
Artificial, electric, synthetic, futuristic, coarse, dark, muddy
Mood? Sombre, mellow, energetic
Acoustic or electronic

TEXTURE – the layers/instruments within a song

Monophonic (formal term) – 1 part eg, vocal solo, guitar solo...anything solo!
Homophonic (formal term) – 1 instrument playing a main melody (often vocals or a solo inst.) while other instruments play a chordal accompaniment
Polyphonic (formal term) – many parts, each playing a separate part.
Unison – where two or more instruments play the same pitch
Call and Response – where a conversation takes place between two instruments

Similar Motion – where the contour of two melodies is the same.
Contrary Motion – where two melodies move in opposite directions
Canonic – a song in ‘rounds’
Imitation – where a part is copied from one instrument across to another

STRUCTURE – the form or order of parts in a song

Form – the order of parts
12 Bar Blues Form – 12 bars made up of chords I, IV and V.
Binary form – 2 parts AB
Verse/Chorus Form – the typical form of a piece of popular music also featuring an intro, bridge or middle 8 and outro
Ternary form – 3 parts ABA
Free form – no structure
Strophic form – where each verse has the same musical accompaniment but different words. Hymns and blues pieces are typical of this form.
Through composed – new material from start to finish
ABACD form – section A followed by B, A, C etc...
Sonata form - Intro–Exposition - development-recapitulation-coda
Rondo Form – many sections. It starts with a main theme followed by a number of new sections. ABACAD etc...